**A Note from Father John About *Spiritual Communion*:**

Have you ever heard the expression, *Spiritual* Communion?

The expression *Spiritual Communion* has not been a regular part of our Catholic vocabulary in the recent past, but it is a practice in the Roman Catholic Church.

Saint Jean Marie Vianney, who lived in France in the 17th and 18th centuries and who is the patron saint of parish priests said, “If we are deprived of Sacramental Communion, let us replace it, as far as we can, by Spiritual Communion, which we can make every moment; for we ought to have always a burning desire to receive the good God.”

“When you do not receive communion and you do not attend Mass, you can make a Spiritual Communion, which is a most beneficial practice,” wrote Saint Teresa of Jesus, “by it the love of God will be greatly impressed on you.” Saint Teresa of Jesus was a mystic from Spain who lived in the 16th century.

The great theologian and Doctor of the Church Saint Thomas Aquinas (13th century) described it as “an ardent desire to receive Jesus in the most holy Sacrament and lovingly embrace him” at a time or in circumstances when we cannot receive him in sacramental Communion.

Certainly, these weeks - as we deal with the Coronavirus - have seen the necessity for Spiritual Communion as we find ourselves self-isolating and in quarantine situations.

Spiritual Communion requires the same disposition as the actual reception of the Sacrament and a turning to Jesus with the heart.

One of the most popular prayers of Spiritual Communion is one composed by Saint Alphonsus Liguori (an Italian moral theologian) in the 1700s:

*My Jesus,*

*I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.*

*I love You above all things, and I desire to receive to receive You into my soul.*

*Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally,*

*come at least spiritually into my heart.*

*I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You.*

*Never permit me to be separated from You.*

*Amen.*

In these days when we may not be able to attend Mass, let us rely on the wisdom of Saints Jean Marie Vianney, Thomas Aquinas, Teresa of Jesus, and Alphonsus Liguori. May their intercession help us all during this challenging time. Holy Saints of God, pray for us!